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RUSSIA WARNS ESTONIA OVER SUPPORT FOR CHECHNYA. The Russian Foreign Ministry on 10 February summoned Juri Kahn, Estonia's ambassador to Moscow, to hand him an official protest about the debate in the parliament on a resolution entitled "On the Right of Self-Determination of the Chechen Nation," Western agencies report. The protest called the debate "barefaced interference in domestic affairs of the Russian Federation, fresh evidence of Estonian authorities' support for the Dudaev regime and of their attempts to undermine the foundations of Russian statehood." The ambassador was warned that "if Tallinn continues its anti-Russian activities, it will have a serious impact on Estonian- Russian relations." -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

LATVIA WARNS IT WILL EXPEL FORMER RUSSIAN SOLDIERS. Interior Minister Janis Adamsons said on 11 February that Russian military soldiers who retired after 28 January 1992 and remained in Latvia in defiance of the troop withdrawal agreements have to register by 15 February to obtain residency permits or face expulsion, Interfax reports. The soldiers were supposed to have left by 31 August 1994, but primarily due to a housing shortage remained in Latvia. Adamsons noted that only 602 Russian retirees were registered as of 8 February. Latvia claims that there are about 4,000 such retirees while Russia says they number only about 1,000. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

HAVEL WARNS OF "NEW YALTA." A "new Yalta" or division of Europe could happen if the West accepts that certain, particularly Central European, countries belong to Russia's sphere of influence and thus should not be allowed to join NATO, Czech President Vaclav Havel said. In an interview with the German magazine Der Spiegel published on 13 February, Havel said the opening up of NATO will serve the interests not just of the reforming states of Central and East Europe who want to join, but also benefit the West. Russia does not have the right to dictate to NATO who it should accept as members and who not, he added. Havel said the admission of new countries to NATO is a logical and natural way to overcome a security vacuum in Central Europe, and for the Czech Republic admission to NATO is a more urgent concern than joining the EU. -- Steve Kettle, OMRI, Inc.

CHECHEN MILITARY COMMANDER WANTS CEASE-FIRE. Chechen military commander Gen. Aslan Maskhadov said his forces are ready to negotiate a cease-fire with Russia, AFP reported on 13 February. Maskhadov said negotiations could also deal with an exchange of prisoners, as proposed by Ingush Vice President Boris Agapov. Meanwhile, Chechen leaders claimed their forces had blown up a former Soviet missile-launching site controlled by Russian troops, causing heavy casualties. On 11 February, Russian forces inflicted heavy artillery bombardment on the city of Argun, about 15 kilometers east of Grozny. There was further fighting the next day in parts of Grozny itself, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung reported on 13 February, noting that the campaign is far from over. -- Victor Gomez and Patrick Moore, OMRI, Inc.

FEDERATION COUNCIL APPEALS TO CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OVER CHECHNYA. The Federation Council has asked the Constitutional Court to rule on the constitutionality of Yeltsin's decrees ordering the use of force in Chechnya. The request focuses on three specific presidential directives issued on 1, 9, and 17 December. Seventy-two deputies supported the motion, while according to the constitution, only 36 votes are required to get the court to review a presidential decree. -- Robert Orttung, OMRI, Inc.

PROTESTS AGAINST CHECHEN WAR CONTINUE. Another gathering was held on 11 February on Moscow's Pushkin Square to protest against the Chechen war, Russian TV and Interfax reported. The event, organized by the human-rights "Memorial" society, Democratic Russia party, and the Soldiers' Mothers Committee, was the first in a series of actions planned by signatories of the agreement, "For Peace and Freedom, Against Bloodshed in Chechnya." "Memorial" activist Aleksandr Daniel said as many as 102 organizations had signed the document by the day of the protest action. The signatories represent groups from across the political spectrum, including the radically anti-communist Democratic Union and the "internationalist" faction of the Russian Communist party. On the eve ofthe meeting, Russian TV's "Podrobnosti" reported that the Soldiers' Mothers Committee intended to prevent next spring's military service draft and planned to dismantle the North Caucasian railway line. -- Julia Wishnevsky, OMRI, Inc.